1 <u>Background of the Invention</u>

2 <u>Field of the Invention:</u>

3 This invention relates to a poker playing system and in particular to a player-

4 elimination poker tournament management system.

5

6 <u>Description of the Prior Art:</u>

7 Poker tournaments have experienced an increase in popularity over the past several

8 years. This increase in poker tournament popularity has occurred mostly in

9 legalized casinos in Nevada, California, Atlantic City, Mississippi, Europe and

10 elsewhere. For example, the most recent World Series of Poker Tournament in Las

11 Vegas of No Limit Texas Hold-em attracted 613 players each posting an entry fee of

12 $10,000 with first place paying $1,500,000. Other popular poker tournament games

13 are Limit Texas Hold-em, Pot Limit Texas Hold-em, Limit Omaha High, Pot Limit

14 Omaha High, Limit Omaha Hi-Lo Split, Limit Seven Card Stud, and Limit Seven

15 Card Hi-Lo Split.

16

17 Playing a poker tournament requires skill, luck and psychology. A poker

18 tournament is best played and is most exciting when played by live players against

19 each other using real cards at the same poker table. The initial assignment of

20 tournament players to the poker tables, the later re-assignment of players to other

21 tables, the initial assignment of poker dealers to the tables, the later re-assignment

22 of dealers to the tables, the closing of tables, keeping up with the number and latest

23 table of the remaining players, keeping up with the number and last table of the

24 eliminated players, advising the dealers and remaining players of the changing

25 betting limits and antes, advising the players of the tournament payoff structure are

26 all factors which tend to slow-down the progress of the tournament. The longer the

27 tournament takes to complete, the longer the dealers have to deal, the more money

28 the casino has to pay the dealers, and the longer the poker tables remain un-

29 available for regular poker games.

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31

1 Many casinos do not offer poker tournaments. Casinos prefer to offer other casino
2 games for the following reasons: Poker tournaments are too labor intensive; Poker
3 tournaments take up too much casino space; Poker tournaments makes too little
4 money for the casino.
5
6 Many prior art card-playing systems disclose either new card games or modified
7 traditional card games. Many prior art card-playing systems disclose the use of
8 electronic cards and electronic chips all controlled and/or generated by a central
9 computer. Many prior art card-playing systems allow numerous players to
10 participate in the card game from remote locations. One prior art example is
11 Nakagawa patent 5,603,502 entitled "Poker Tournament Method". Nakagawa
12 discloses such a tournament method wherein when the total number of players
13 remaining in the games declines to a specific number being an exponential product
14 of the number 2, then such players are matched into pairs each pair playing one-on-
15 one games. Another prior art patent is Marks patent 5,755,621 entitled "Modified
16 Poker Card/Tournament Game And Interactive Network Computer System For
17 Implementing Same". Marks discloses an electronic system wherein a plurality of
18 players play a tournament game against each other and wherein individual players
19 play a different game against the house. Mark's system comprises a central
20 computer for effectively managing the tournament amongst the plurality of players
21 and for managing the individual games played by the individual players against the
22 house. None of the cited prior art patents disclose the "Poker Tournament
23 Management System" of the present invention which controls the flow of players
24 from their initially assigned poker tables to later re-assigned poker tables as players
25 get eliminated from the tournament and as poker tables get closed during the
26 tournament.
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1   <u>Summary of the Invention</u>

2   According to the present invention, the poker tournament management system

3   allows a plurality of players to participate in a player-elimination poker

4   tournament. The system utilizes several poker tables, each poker table having

5   several player positions. The system comprises: a central processing unit; at least

6   one main console; and first signal transmitting means for allowing each main

7   console and the central processing unit to send signals to each other and to receive

8   signals from each other; each main console further comprising player information

9   entering means; and the central processing unit responding to the player

10   information accessed by the entering means for initially randomly assigning each

11   participating player to a specific player position at a specific poker table. Features

12   of the present invention are that the central processing unit utilizes a pre-stored

13   poker table replenishment algorithm, a pre-stored poker table closure algorithm

14   and a pre-stored poker table replenishment / re-filling algorithm for re-assigning

15   players from donor poker tables to donee poker tables and for closing chosen donor

16   poker tables.

17

18   Objects and advantages of the present invention are to: Allow a poker tournament

19   dealer to be more efficient; Allow the dealer to deal more hands per unit time;

20   Allow the poker tournament manager to remotely monitor the number of remaining

21   players per poker table; Allow the manager to better distribute the number of

22   players per poker table; and Allow the poker tournament to be more quickly

23   terminated.

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1   <u>Brief Description of the Drawings</u>

2   The above and other features, objects, and advantages of the present invention will

3   be further appreciated from a reading of the following detailed description in

4   conjunction with the drawing in which:

5

6   Figures 1a-e show top views of poker table 500 showing how the four betting rounds

7   of a limit Holdem poker hand are played.

8

9   Figure 2 shows a first embodiment of system 100 according to the present invention

10   in a multiple poker table embodiment wherein a dealer console DC is located at each

11   poker table.

12

13   Figure 3 shows a second embodiment of system 100 according to the present

14   invention in a multiple poker table embodiment wherein a dealer console DC and a

15   plurality of player consoles PC are located at each poker table.

16

17   Figures 4a and 4b respectively show detailed views of main central processing unit

18   CPU 300 and secondary central processing unit CPU 400 according to the present

19   invention.

20

21   Figure 5a shows main console MC 200 according to the present invention while

22   Figures 5b-m show various touch-responsive display screens of main console MC

23   200.

24

25   Figure 6a shows dealer console DC 110 according to the present invention while

26   Figures 6b-m show various touch-responsive display screens of dealer console DC

27   110.

28

29   Figure 7a shows player console PC 10 according to the present invention while

30   Figures 7b-i show various touch-responsive display screens of player console PC 10.

31

1   Figure 8 is a time table showing the elimination of players, the re-assignment of
.2   players, the closing of poker tables, and the replenishment / re-filling of poker tables
3   during a poker tournament according to the present invention.

4

5   Figures 9a-c show the modular plug-in features of dealer console DC 110 and player
6   consoles PC 10-19 onto poker table 1 according to the present invention.

7

8   Figures 10a-b show the modular plug-in features of main console MC 200 onto its
9   support structure according to the present invention.

10

11   <u>Detailed Description of the Invention</u>

12   Limit Texas Hold-em (hereinafter called Limit Holdem) is an example of a very
13   popular poker room game (side game) and poker tournament game. Limit Holdem
14   is played by up to 10 players on an oval-shaped poker table. The casino dealer sits in
15   the middle of one of the long sides of the table. The betting limits are set by the
16   casino. The most popular Holdem limits are: $5/$10; $10/$20; $15/$30; $20/$40;
17   $30/$60; and $50/$100. The first $ amount is the "big blind" amount. In $10/$20
18   limit Holdem, the big blind is $10. The "little blind" amount is $5. During the 1st
19   and 2nd betting rounds of a poker hand, the defined bet is $10 plus up to 3 possible
20   raises for a total maximum bet of $40. During the 3rd and 4th betting rounds, the
21   defined bet is $20 plus up to 3 possible raises for a total maximum bet of $80.

22

23   The following detailed description relates to $10/$20 limit Holdem. Each hand of
24   limit Holdem involves several steps taken by the casino dealer and up to four betting
25   rounds effected by the players. The order of dealing by the casino dealer and the
26   order of betting by the players are controlled by the designated player position
27   called the "button". The player who is the button is designated by a round white
28   plastic button which is physically placed in front of that player so that the casino
29   dealer and all the other players know which player is the button.

30

31

1   In $10/$20 limit Holdem, each player initially buys poker chips for no less than the
2   minimum amount set by the casino (such as $100) and up to $1,000 or more at the
3   discretion of the player. Each player now has a stack of chips for playing each hand
4   of poker. Before the beginning play (before the first hand is dealt and played), the
5   casino dealer deals each player one card face-up in clockwise order starting with the
6   first player to the left of the dealer. The player who is dealt the highest-ranking card
7   face-up is designated the button. The plastic button is physically placed in front of
8   that player who was dealt the highest ranking card face-up.
9

10 There are two ways by which the casino ("the house") makes money from a poker
11 game. In high limit Holdem, the casino usually charges each player at the table a
12 monetary amount ("time") during each 1/2 hour. For example, in $10/$20 limit
13 Holdem, the time amount charged each player each 30 minutes may be $5. In low
14 limit Holdem, the casino usually takes an amount ("the rake") being a certain
15 maximum percentage from each pot at the end of each poker hand. For example, in
16 $5/$10 limit Holdem, the rake may be up to a maximum of $5.
17

18 The wager options that a player has or the wager actions that a player may choose
19 from are fold, check, call, bet or raise. Fold means that a player does not want to
20 meet the pending bet or pending raise amount. Such player surrenders his two face-
21 down hole cards; and such player surrenders whatever moneys he has wagered so
22 far up to that betting round of the poker hand. Check means that a player does not
23 want to bet when there is no pending bet or no pending raise amount. Call means
24 that a player puts into the pot the same amount as the pending bet or pending raise
25 amount. Bet means that a player bets the limit amount allowed during that betting
26 round. Such bet amount may be the big blind amount or double the big blind
27 amount depending on the betting round. Raise means that a player bets an amount
28 greater than the pending bet or pending raise amount. Such raise may be a multiple
29 of the big blind amount or a multiple of the double big blind amount allowed during
30 that betting round.
31

1   Side pots are created as follows. A player must either fold, check, call, bet, or raise.

2   Such player has a certain number of chips in front of him at that time of play. If

3   such player is not able to call the whole pending bet or pending raise amount; or if

4   such player is not able to make a whole bet; or if such player is not able to make a

5   whole raise, then the dealer creates a side pot in addition to the already existing

6   main pot. The dealer determines the reduced amount that such player can call, bet

7   or raise. Then the dealer places that amount into the main pot times the number of

8   active players still in the hand at that time. For example, if the all-in player has only

9     $5 and there are 4 active players in the hand, then the dealer places $20 into the

10   main pot. The dealer then creates the side pot from the difference that the other 3

11   active players further call, bet or raise. The all-in player can only win the main pot.

12   The other 3 active players can win the main pot and/or the side pot.

13

14   <u>Figures 1a-e</u>

15   Figures 1a-e are top views of poker table 500 showing how a limit Holdem poker

16   hand is played. See Figure 1a. Table 500 is shown as viewed from above. The

17   positions of casino dealer D and of players 1-10 are shown. For explanatory

18   purposes only, it is assumed that player 5 was dealt the highest-ranking card face-

19   up and is therefor designated the button BU for the first hand. Therefore, round

20   white plastic button BU is physically placed in front of player 5. Before any hand of

21   limit Holdem is played, the most important questions asked by dealer D and by all

22   the players at the table are: Which player is the button BU? Which player is the

23   little blind LB? Which player is the big blind BB? In this example, player 5 is the

24   button BU. Player 6 is the little blind LB and places a $5 chip on the table in front of

25   him before the first hand is dealt. Player 7 is the big blind BB and places a $10 chip

26   on the table in front of him before the first hand is dealt.

27

28   Dealer D now knows that player 5 is the button. Dealing by dealer D and betting by

29   players 1-10 are performed in a clock-wise manner relative to player 5 who is the

30   button BU. Each hand of limit Holdem comprises up to four betting rounds. The 1st

31   betting round is called the pre-flop betting round; the 2nd betting round is called

1   the post-flop betting round; the 3rd betting round is called the turn betting round;

2   and the 4th betting round is called the river betting round. Button BU remains in

3   place throughout all betting rounds of a poker hand. Before the pre-flop betting

4   round, player 6 (who is the little blind LB) must place a $5 chip in front of him.

5   Player 7 (who is the big blind BB) must place a $10 chip in front of him. Players 6

6   and 7 have not yet been dealt any cards by dealer D. Dealer D now deals player 6

7   one hole card face-down; player 7 one hole card face-down; and so on until player 5

8   (the button BU) is dealt one hole card face-down. Dealer D next deals each player a

9   second hole card face-down in the same clockwise order as before. Player 8 now has

10   three options: he may call the big blind amount of $10; he may raise by the big blind

11   amount and make the bet $20; or he may drop out of the hand and fold by

12   surrendering his two cards to dealer D. After player 8 exercises one of his options,

13   then it is up to player 9 to exercise one of his options, and so on until player 5 (the

14   button BU) exercises one of his options. Player 6 (the little blind LB who has already

15   placed a $5 chip in front of him) may now exercise one of the following options. He

16   may complete his bet to $10 by placing a second $5 chip in front of him if no one

17   before him has raised to $20 or higher. He may call a higher bet if there was at least

18   one raise before him. He may drop out and fold by surrendering his two cards and

19   his $5 chip. If player 6 still has an option to raise and in fact does raise, then all

20   subsequent remaining players must either meet his raise or must fold their hands.

21   Player 7 (the big blind BB who has already placed a $10 chip in front of him) may

22   now exercise one of the following options. He may call if no one has raised before

23   him by pushing his $10 chip forward. He may call a higher bet if there was at least

24   one raise before him. He may drop out of the hand and fold by surrendering his two

25   cards and his $10 chip if there was at least one raise before him. If player 7 still has

26   an option to raise and in fact does raise, then all subsequent remaining players must

27   either meet his raise or must fold their hands. The maximum number of raises

28   allowed by the casino (usually three raises) limits the aforementioned clockwise

29   process. Once the maximum number of raises is reached at a given player, then the

30   subsequent remaining players may only call the prior raises or may fold their

31   hands. The total amount or value of the chips in the middle of table 500 after this 1st

1 or pre-flop betting round is called the pot. The monetary value of the pot is dynamic

2 because it increases each time a player calls, bets or raises. Those players remaining

3 in the hand after the pre-flop betting round are active players. In this example, the

4 remaining active players after the pre-flop betting round are players 6, 7, 9, 1, 3 and

5 4 in clockwise order relative to button BU. Players 8, 10, 2 and 5 folded (dropped

6 out of the hand) and are inactive players during the rest of the hand. See Figure 1b.

7

8 After the 1st or pre-flop betting round is complete, dealer D burns a card B1 face-

9 down and places it on the table to his left. Dealer D next deals three cards F1, F2

10 and F3 face-up and places them on the table in front of him. These three cards are

11 called the flop cards. The remaining active players in the hand now commence the

12 2nd or post-flop betting round. During the post-flop betting round, player 6 may

13 check by not betting or may bet $10. Player 7 may check if and only if player 6

14 checked, or may call $10 if player 6 bet $10, or may raise to $20 if player 6 bet $10,

15 or may fold if player 6 bet $10. Player 9 may exercise one of the same options as

16 player 7, and so on by players 1 and 3 until player 4 exercises one of his options. If

17 player 4 still has an option to raise and in fact does raise, then players 6, 7, 9, 1 and

18 3 must meet the raise or must fold. Again, the maximum number of raises allowed

19 by the casino limits the aforementioned clockwise process. Once the maximum

20 number of raises is reached at a given remaining active player, then the subsequent

21 remaining active players may only call or fold. The total amount or value of the

22 chips in the middle of the table after this 2nd or post-flop betting round is the new

23 pot amount. Those players remaining in the hand after the post-flop betting round

24 are active players. In this example, the remaining active players after the post-flop

25 betting round are players 6, 9, 1 and 3 in clockwise order relative to button BU.

26 Players 7 and 4 folded (dropped out of the hand) and are inactive players during the

27 rest of the hand. See Figure 1c.

28

29

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31

1   After the 2nd or post-flop betting round is complete, dealer D burns another card
2   B2 face-down and places it on the table next to burn card B1. Dealer D then deals
3   another card TU face-up and places it on the table in line with flop cards F1, F2 and
4   F3. The remaining active players (6, 9, 1, and 3) now commence the 3rd or turn
5   betting round. During the turn betting round, player 6 may check by betting no
6   amount or may bet $20. Player 9 may check if and only if player 6 checked, or may
7   call $20 if player 6 bet $20, or may raise to $40 if player 6 bet $20, or may fold his
8   hand if player 6 bet $20. Player 1 may exercise the same options as player 9, and so
9   on until player 3 exercises one of his options. If player 3 raises, then players 6, 9, and
10   1 must either meet the raise or must fold. Again, the maximum number of raises
11   allowed by the casino limits this clockwise process. Once the maximum number of
12   raises is reached at a given player, then the subsequent remaining players may only
13   call or fold. The total amount or value of the chips in the middle of the table after
14   this 3rd or turn betting round is the new pot amount. Those players remaining in
15   the hand after the turn betting round are active players. In this example, the
16   remaining active players after the turn betting round are players 6, 1 and 3 in
17   clockwise order relative to button BU. Player 9 folded (dropped out of the hand)
18   and is an inactive player during the rest of the hand. See Figure 1d.

19

20   After the 3rd or turn betting round is complete, dealer D burns another card B3
21   face-down and places it on the table next to burn cards B1 and B2. Dealer D then
22   deals another card RI face-up and places it on the table in line with cards F1, F2, F3
23   and T. The remaining active players (6, 1, 3) in the hand now commence the 4th or
24   river betting round. During the river betting round, player 6 may check by betting
25   no amount or may bet $20. Player 1 may check if and only if player 6 checked, or
26   may call $20 if player 6 bet $20, or may raise to $40 if player 6 bet $20, or may fold
27   if player 6 bet $20. Player 3 may exercise one of the same options as player 1. If
28   player 3 raises, then players 6 and 1 must either meet the raise or must fold their
29   hands. Again, the maximum number of raises allowed by the casino limits the
30   aforementioned clockwise process. Once the maximum number of raises is reached
31   at a given remaining active player, then the subsequent remaining active players

1   may only call or fold. The total amount or value of the chips in the middle of the
2   table after this 4th or river betting round is the final pot amount. Those players
3   remaining in the hand after the river betting round are active players. In this
4   example, the remaining active players after the river betting round are players 6, 1
5   and 3 in clockwise order relative to button BU. See Figure 1e.

6

7   After the 4th or river betting round is complete, each remaining active player (6, 1,
8   3) in clockwise order relative to button B must expose his two cards face-up. Then,
9   upon exposing his two cards face-up, each player must declare to the dealer and to
10 the other players the best poker hand that his two cards make in combination with
11 the five face-up cards F1, F2, F3, TU and RI in the middle of the table. In most
12 casinos, the dealer must read and declare out loud the best poker hand made by
13 each player. In many cases a player will not expose his two cards because such
14 player concedes to himself that his best poker hand does not beat the other exposed
15 poker hands. After all the players' cards are exposed and after all the best poker
16 hands are declared, then the dealer declares the winners of the main pot and any
17 side pots. If two or more players make the same best poker hand, then the main pot
18 and/or any side pots are split between/among such winning players.

19

20 A poker tournament is different from a one table poker game. Generally, only up to
21 10 players participate in the typical hold-em game. Several hundred players may
22 enter and participate in a limit hold-em poker tournament. Also, many poker tables
23 are initially used in a poker tournament. Some recent poker tournaments have
24 started with over 70 tables. Also, many poker dealers initially start dealing in a
25 poker tournament at least equal in number to the initial number of poker tables.
26 Dealers must be rotated from open table to open table and must be given breaks at
27 pre-determined time periods. Also, players are eliminated from a poker tournament
28 once they run out of chips. This elimination of players requires the re-assignment of
29 other players from one table to another table and the closure of tables. In a regular
30 hold-em game the chip denominations do not change. In a poker tournament, small
31 denomination chips are converted to larger denomination chips as the poker

1   tournament progresses because the betting limits increase at pre-determined time

2   periods thereby obviating the use of small denomination chips to make larger and

3   larger bets. The general purpose of the present invention is to provide the poker

4   tournament manager the means to efficiently manage a dynamic poker tournament.

5

6   <u>Figure 2</u>

7   Figure 2 shows a first embodiment of system 100 according to the present invention

8   in a multiple poker table embodiment wherein a dealer console DC is located at each

9   poker table. System 100 comprises main central processing unit CPU 300; at least

10   one main console MC 200; dealer consoles DC 110-190 being respectively located on

11   poker tables 1-9; and secondary self-powered central processing unit CPU 400. Each

12   main console MC 200 is connected to CPU 300 by signal transmitting means 3200.

13   Dealer consoles DC 110-190 are respectively connected to CPU 300 by signal

14   transmitting means 3110-3190. Secondary CPU 400 is connected to CPU 300 by

15   signal transmitting means 3400. CPU 300 may send signals to and may receive

16   signals from each main console MC 200, dealer consoles DC 110-190, and secondary

17   CPU 400 via such respective signal transmitting means which may be wireless

18   transmitting means.

19

20   <u>Figure 3</u>

21   Figure 3 shows a second embodiment of system 100 according to the present

22   invention in a multiple poker table embodiment wherein a dealer console DC and a

23   plurality of player consoles PC are located at each poker table. System 100

24   comprises main central processing unit CPU 300; at least one main console MC 200;

25   dealer consoles DC 110-190 being respectively located on poker tables 1-9; player

26   consoles PC 10-19 being located on table 1 and so on to player consoles PC 90-99

27   being located on table 9; and secondary self-powered central processing unit CPU

28   400. Each main console MC 200 is connected to CPU 300 by signal transmitting

29   means 3200. Dealer consoles DC 110-190 are respectively connected to CPU 300 by

30   signal transmitting means 3110-3190. Player consoles PC 10-99 are respectively

1   connected to CPU 300 by signal transmitting means 3010-3099. Secondary CPU 400

2   is connected to CPU 300 by signal transmitting means 3400. CPU 300 may send

3   signals to and may receive signals from each main console MC 200, dealer consoles

4   DC 110-190, player consoles PC 10-99, and secondary CPU 400 via such respective

5   signal transmitting means which may be wireless transmitting means.

6

7   According to the present invention with respect to the embodiment of Figure 2,

8   main CPU 300 randomly assigns a player to an initial player position at an initial

9   poker table or later re-assigns a player from a first player position at a donor poker

10   table to a second player position at a donee poker table. According to the present

11   invention with respect to the embodiment of Figure 3, main CPU 300 in effect

12   randomly assigns a player to an initial player console position at an initial poker

13   table or later re-assigns a player from a first player console position at a donor

14   poker table to a second player console position at a donee poker table.

15

16   <u>Figures 4a-b</u>

17   Figures 4a and 4b respectively show detailed views of main central processing unit

18   CPU 300 and secondary or back-up central processing unit CPU 400 according to

19   the present invention. Figure 4a shows Main Central Processing Unit CPU 300

20   including (but not by way of limitation): a Store of Initial Table Assignments /

21   Initial Player Position Assignments; a Store of Table Re-Assignments / Player

22   Position Re-Assignments; a Store of Remaining Players; a Store of Eliminated

23   Players; a Store of Dealer Initial Table Assignments / Dealer Table Re-Assignments;

24   a Store of Tournament Betting Limits / Antes / Blinds; a Store of the Table

25   Replenishment Algorithm, a Store of the Table Re-Filling / Replenishment

26   Algorithm; and a Store of the Table Closure Algorithm. Figure 4b shows emergency

27   self-powered Secondary Central Processing Unit CPU 400 including (but not by way

28   of limitation) the same stores.

29

30

31

1   <u>Figures 5a-m</u>

2   Figure 5a shows main console MC 200 according to the present invention while

3   Figures 5b-m show various touch-responsive screens of main display 201.

4

5   Figure 5a shows main console MC 200 generally comprising: Main Display 201;

6   Special Keyboard 202; Dealer Console Special Keyboard 203; Player Console

7   Special Keyboard 204; Standard Keyboard 205 with (enter button) 205a; Numerical

8   Keyboard 206 with (Table 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9) buttons 206a and (Player Position 1 2 3 4

9   5 6 7 8 9 10) buttons 206b; Main Printer 207 with (printer button) 207a; and Card

10   Swiper 208 with (swiper button) 208a. The components of Special Keyboard 202,

11   Dealer Console Special Keyboard 203, Player Console Special Keyboard 204,

12   Standard Keyboard 205, and Numerical Keyboard 206 may be electronically

13   displayed on main display 201 and may be operated as a touch-screen responsive

14   system. Special Keyboard 202 further comprises (clear display / up / down / all

15   buttons) 202a, (button 5b), (button 5c), (button 5d), (button 5e), (button 5f), (button

16   5g), (button 5h), (button 5i), (button 5j), (button 5k) and (button 5l). Dealer Console

17   Special Keyboard 203 further comprises (button 6b), (button 6c), (button 6d),

18   (button 6e), (button 6f), (button 6g), (button 6h), (button 6i), (button 6j), (button

19   6k), (button 6l) and (button 6m) of Figures 6a-m and may be used by the poker

20   tournament manager to remotely access dealer console display screens as will be

21   hereinafter explained. Player Console Special Keyboard 204 further comprises

22   (button 7b), (button 7c), (button 7d), (button 7e), (button 7f), (button 7g), (button

23   7h) and (button 7i) of Figures 7a-i and may be used by the poker tournament

24   manager to remotely access player console display screens as will be hereinafter

25   explained.

26

27   Figure 5b shows main console MC 200 specifically comprising Main Display 201

28   displaying an Initial Player Assignment including Player Name, Player ID #,

29   Assigned Table, Assigned Player Position, Total Entry Fee, and Tournament game.

30   Main console MC 200 also comprises Special Keyboard 202 with (button 5b). When

31   a player wants to enter and participate in the poker tournament, the poker

1   tournament manager or his designated main console operator touches (button 5b).

2   The operator then enters the name of the player onto Standard Keyboard 205 or

3   enters the previously assigned casino ID number of the player onto Numerical

4   Keyboard 206. The operator then touches (enter button) 205a on Standard

5   Keyboard 205. In the alternative, the operator may swipe the previously issued

6   casino plastic ID card of the player onto card swiper 208. The operator then presses

7   (swiper button) 208a and then touches (enter button) 205a. Upon (enter button)

8   205a being touched, a signal is sent to CPU 300 for storing such entered

9   information. CPU 300 then randomly assigns such entering player to an initially

10   assigned poker table and to an initially assigned player position. CPU 300 already

11   has a store therein of the number and numbering of the poker tables and the

12   number and numbering of the player positions at each poker table available to be

13.   used in the poker tournament. CPU 300 then sends a signal to main display 201 to

14   display such information known as Initial Player Assignment shown in Figure 5b.

15   CPU 300 also simultaneously sends a signal to the dealer console display at the

16   assigned poker table such as in Figure 6b and to the assigned player console display

17   at the assigned poker table such as in Figure 7b. Usually, the entering player would

18   already have paid his entry fee to the cashier and would now show the entry receipt

19   to the main console operator. To print such displayed information, the operator

20   presses (printer button) 207a of Main Printer 207. To clear such displayed

21   information, the operator presses (clear button) 202a.

22

23   Figure 5c shows main console MC 200 specifically comprising Main Display 201

24   displaying the Initial Player Assignments list including Player Name, Player ID #,

25   Assigned Table, and Assigned Player Position. Main console MC 200 also comprises

26.   Special Keyboard 202 with (button 5c). When the main console operator wants to

27   access and display the names of all entered participants in the poker tournament up

28   to that time, the operator touches (button 5c) and then touches (enter button) 205a

29   on Standard Keyboard 205. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing the stored

30   participant information mentioned above. CPU 300 then sends a signal to main

31   display 201 to display such stored information known as Initial Player Assignments

1   shown in Figure 5c. CPU 300 also simultaneously sends a signal to the dealer console

2   display at the assigned poker table such as in Figure 6b and to the assigned player

3   console display at the assigned poker table such as in Figure 7b. To print such

4   displayed information, the operator presses (printer button) 207a of Main Printer

5   207. To clear such displayed information, the operator presses (clear button) 202a.

6   It is therefore apparent that CPU 300 generates such Initial Player Assignments list

7   as a result of randomly assigning each entering player to an initial poker table and

8   to an initial player position at such poker table.

9

10   Figure 5d shows main console MC 200 specifically comprising Main Display 201

11   displaying the Eliminated Players list including Player Name, Player ID #, Last

12   Assigned Table, and Last Assigned Player Position. Main console MC 200 also

13   comprises Special Keyboard 202 with (button 5d). When the main console operator

14   wants to access and display the Eliminated Players list from the poker tournament

15   up to that time, the operator touches (button 5d) and then touches (enter button)

16   205a on Standard Keyboard 205. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such

17   stored information as mentioned hereinafter. CPU 300 then sends a signal to main

18   display 201 to display such stored information known as Eliminated Players shown

19   in Figure 5d. To print such displayed information, the operator presses (printer

20   button) 207a. To clear main display 201 of such displayed information, the operator

21   presses (clear button) 202a. The Eliminated Players list is generated at the various

22   poker tables by the dealers as will be hereinafter explained with respect to Figure

23   6d. When a player at a given poker table loses all his chips, that player is eliminated

24   from the tournament. The dealer at such poker table touches the (eliminated

25   button) on the special keyboard, then the dealer presses the respective (Player

26   Position) button on the numerical keyboard, and then the dealer presses the (enter

27   button) on the standard keyboard. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for storage of

28   such Eliminated Player information. CPU 300 already has stored the player name

29   and player ID # corresponding to such eliminated player. With respect to Figure 3,

30   when a player loses all his chips and is eliminated from the tournament, such

31   player's player console position is in effect closed or de-activated until another

1   player is re-assigned to such player console position.

2

3   Figure 5e shows main console MC 200 specifically comprising Main Display 201

4   displaying the Player Re-Assignments list including Player Name, Player ID#,

5   Present Table, Present Player Position, Prior Table, and Prior Player Position. Main

6   console MC 200 also comprises Special Keyboard 202 with (button 5e). When the

7   main console operator wants to access and display the Player Re-Assignments list up

8   to that time, the operator touches (button 5e) and then touches (enter button) 205a

9   on Standard Keyboard 205. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such

10   stored information as mentioned hereinafter. CPU 300 then sends a signal to main

11   display 201 to display such stored information known as Player Re-Assignments

12   shown in Figure 5e. To print such displayed information, the operator presses

13   (printer button) 207a. To clear main display 201 of such displayed information, the

14   operator presses (clear button) 202a. Players are re-assigned from a donor poker

15   table to a donee poker table in accordance with the pre-stored algorithms

16   hereinafter explained in relation to Figure 8.

17

18   Figure 5f shows main console MC 200 specifically comprising Main Display 201

19   displaying the Remaining Players list including Player Name, Player ID #, Table,

20   and Player Position. Main console MC 200 also comprises Special Keyboard 202

21   with (button5f). When the main console operator wants to access and display the

22   Remaining Players list in the poker tournament up to that time, the operator

23   touches (button 5f) and then touches (enter button) 205a on Standard Keyboard

24   205. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such stored information as

25   mentioned hereinafter. CPU 300 then sends a signal to Main Display 201 to display

26   such stored information known as Remaining Players shown in Figure 5f. To print

27   such displayed information, the operator presses (printer button) 207a. To clear

28   Main Display 201 of such displayed information, the operator presses (clear button)

29   202a. CPU 300 constructs the Remaining Player list from the following information:

30   the stored initial player assignment list; the stored player re-assignment list; and the

31   stored Eliminated Player list. The number of players remaining at a given poker

1   table at a given time is equal to the number of initially assigned players to that given

2   poker table plus the number of players re-assigned from donor poker tables to that

3   given poker table, minus the number of players eliminated from that given poker

4   table minus the number of players re-assigned from that given poker table to donee

5   poker tables.

6

7   Figure 5g shows main console MC 200 specifically comprising Main Display 201

8   displaying the Tournament Schedule including TOURNAMENT CHIP TOTAL,

9   Play Time, Little Blind, Big Blind, Ante, Limits, BREAK time, CHIP change. Main

10   console MC 200 also comprises Special Keyboard 202 with (button 5g). Small

11   denomination chips are converted to larger denomination chips as the poker

12   tournament progresses because the betting limits increase at pre-determined time

13   periods thereby obviating the use of small denomination chips to make larger and

14   larger bets. When the main console operator wants to access and display the Poker

15   Tournament schedule, the operator touches (button 5g) and then touches (enter

16   button) 205a on Standard Keyboard 205. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for

17   accessing such pre-stored tournament schedule. CPU 300 then sends a signal to

18   main display 201 to display such pre-stored information known as Tournament

19   Schedule shown in Figure 5g. To print such displayed information, the operator

20   presses (printer button) 207a. To clear main display 201 of such displayed

21   information, the operator presses (clear button) 202a.

22

23   According to the present invention, there are two types of information stored in

24   CPU 300. The first type of stored information relates to information which is stored

25   in CPU 300 before actual tournament play begins and includes: Store of pre-

26   numbered poker tables and store of pre-numbered player positions at each poker

27   table; Store of Initial Table Assignments / Initial Player Position Assignments; Store

28   of Dealer Initial Table Assignments / Dealer Table Re-Assignments; Store of

29   Tournament Schedule / Betting Limits / Antes; Store of Tournament Payoff

30   schedule; Store of the Table Replenishment Algorithm; Store of the Table Re-Filling

31   / Table Replenishment Algorithm; and Store of the Table Closure Algorithm. The

1   second type of stored information relates to dynamic information which is generated

2   while tournament play is in progress and includes: Store of Table Re-Assignments /

3   Player Position Re-Assignments; Store of Remaining Players; and Store of

4   Eliminated Players.

5

6   Figure 5h shows main console MC 200 specifically comprising Main Display 201

7   displaying the Dealer Initial Poker Table Assignment / Dealer Poker Table Re-

8   Assignments schedule including Dealer Name, Dealer ID#, Initial Poker Table

9   Assignment / Poker Table Re-Assignments, and dealer BREAK times. Main console

10   MC 200 also comprises Special Keyboard 202 with (button 5h). When the main

11   console operator wants to access and display the Dealer Initial Poker Table

12   Assignment / Dealer Poker Table Re-Assignments schedule, the operator touches

13   (button 5h) and then touches (enter button) 205a on Standard Keyboard 205. This

14   sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such pre-stored information. CPU 300 then

15   sends a signal to main display 201 to display such pre-stored information known as

16   Dealer Initial Poker Table Assignment / Dealer Poker Table Re-Assignments shown

17   Figure 5h. To print such displayed information, the operator presses (printer

18   button) 207a. To clear main display 201 of such displayed information, the operator

19   presses (clear button) 202a.

20

21   Figure 5i shows main console MC 200 specifically comprising Main Display 201

22   displaying the Tournament Payoff schedule including number of Players, Total

23   Entry Fee, Tournament description, Total Prize Pool, and place payoffs. Main

24   console MC 200 also comprises Special Keyboard 202 with (button 5i). When the

25   main console operator wants to access and display the Tournament Payoff schedule,

26   the operator touches (button 5i) and then touches (enter button) 205a on Standard

27   Keyboard 205. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such pre-stored

28   information. CPU 300 then sends a signal to main display 201 to display such pre-

29   stored information known as Tournament Payoff shown Figure 5i. To print such

30   displayed information, the operator presses (printer button) 207a. To clear main

31   display 201 of such displayed information, the operator presses (clear button) 202a.

1

2   Figure 5j shows main console MC 200 specifically comprising Main Display 201

3   displaying the Table Closures list including number of Table closed and Time

4   Closed. Main console MC 200 also comprises Special Keyboard 202 with (button 5j).

5   When the main console operator wants to access and display the Table Closures list

6   up to that time, the operator touches (button 5j) and then touches (enter button)

7   205a on Standard Keyboard 205. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such

8   stored information. CPU 300 then sends a signal to main display 201 to display such

9   stored information known as Table Closures shown Figure 5j. To print such

10   displayed information, the operator presses (printer button) 207a. To clear main

11   display 201 of such displayed information, the operator presses (clear button) 202a.

12   The Table Closure list is generated by CPU 300 during actual play of the poker

13   tournament in accordance with the pre-stored table closure algorithm hereinafter

14   explained in relation to Figure 8.

15

16   Figure 5k shows main console MC 200 specifically comprising Main Display 201

17   displaying the Betting Limits. Main console MC 200 also comprises Special

18   Keyboard 202 with (button 5k). When the main console operator wants to access

19   and display the Betting Limits at that time, the operator touches (button 5k) and

20   then touches (enter button) 205a on Standard Keyboard 205. This sends a signal to

21   CPU 300 for accessing such stored information. CPU 300 then sends a signal to

22   main display 201 to display such stored information known as Betting Limits list

23   shown Figure 5k. To print such displayed information, the operator presses (printer

24   button) 207a. To clear main display 201 of such displayed information, the operator

25   presses (clear button) 202a.

26

27   Figure 5l shows main console MC 200 specifically comprising Main Display 201

28   displaying the Tournament Time line list. Main console MC 200 also comprises

29   Special Keyboard 202 with (button 5l). When the main console operator wants to

30   access and display the Tournament Time line, the operator touches (button 5l) and

31   then touches (enter button) 205a on Standard Keyboard 205. This sends a signal to

1   CPU 300 for accessing such stored information. CPU 300 then sends a signal to

2   main display 201 to display such stored information known as Tournament Time

3   line list shown Figure 5l. To print such displayed information, the operator presses

4   (printer button) 207a. To clear main display 201 of such displayed information, the

5   operator presses (clear button) 202a.

6

7   Figure 5m shows main console MC 200 specifically comprising Main Display 201

8   displaying both the Table Closures list and the Tournament Payoff schedule as

9   respectively described above in relation to Figures 5j and 5i. If the main console

10   operator wants to access and display the Table Closures list, the operator touches

11   (button 5j) and then touches (enter button) 205a on Standard Keyboard 205. If the

12   main console operator also wants to access and display the Tournament Payoff

13   schedule, the operator touches (button 5i) and then touches (enter button) 205a on

14   Standard Keyboard 205. To print such displayed combined information, the

15   operator presses (printer button) 207a. To clear main display 201 of such combined

16   displayed information, the operator presses (all clear button) 202a. To clear main

17   display 201 only of the Table Closures list, the operator presses (up clear button)

18   202a. To clear main display 201 only of the Tournament Payoff schedule, the

19   operator presses (down clear button) 202a.

20

21   <u>Figures 6a-m</u>

22   Figure 6a shows dealer console DC 110 according to the present invention while

23   Figures 6b-m show various touch-responsive screens of dealer display 111.

24

25   Figure 6a shows dealer console DC 110 generally comprising Dealer display 111;

26   Special keyboard 112; Standard keyboard 113 with (enter button) 113a; Numerical

27   keyboard 114 with (Player Position 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10) button 114a; Dealer printer

28   115 with (printer button) 115a; and Card swiper 116 with (swiper button) 116a.

29   Special keyboard 112 further comprises (clear display / up / down / all buttons)

30   112a, (eliminated button) 112b, (betting order button) 112c, (button 6b), (button 6c),

31   (button 6d), (button 6e), (button 6f), (button 6g), (button 6h), (button 6i), (button

1   6j), (button 6k), (button 6l) and (button 6m). The components of Special keyboard

2   112, Standard keyboard 113 and Numerical keyboard 114 may be electronically

3   displayed on dealer display 111 and may be operated as a touch-screen responsive

4   system.

5

6   Figure 6b shows dealer console DC 110 specifically comprising Dealer display 111

7   displaying the list of those entering players initially randomly assigned to Table 1

8   called the Initial Player Assignments at Table 1 list including Player Name, Player

9   ID #, and Assigned Player Position. Dealer console DC 110 also comprises Special

10   keyboard 112 with (button 6b). When the dealer or the poker tournament manager

11   want to access and display the Initial Player Assignments at Table 1 list, the dealer

12   touches (button 6b) and then touches (enter button) 113a on Standard Keyboard

13   113. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such stored information. CPU 300

14   then sends a signal to dealer display 111 to display such stored information known

15   as Initial Player Assignments at Table 1 shown in Figure 6b. To print such displayed

16   information, the operator presses (printer button) 115a. To clear dealer display 111

17   of such displayed information, the dealer presses (clear button) 112a.

18

19   Figure 6c shows dealer console DC 110 specifically comprising Dealer display 111

20   displaying the Remaining Players at Table 1 list including Player Name, Player ID

21   #, and Player Position. Dealer console DC 110 also comprises Special keyboard 112

22   with (button 6c). When the dealer or the poker tournament manager wants to access

23   and display the Remaining Players at Table 1 list at that time, the dealer touches

24   (button 6c) and then touches (enter button) 113a on Standard Keyboard 113. This

25   sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such stored information. CPU 300 then

26   sends a signal to dealer display 111 to display such stored information known as

27   Remaining Players at Table 1 shown in Figure 6c. To print such displayed

28   information, the operator presses (printer button) 115a. To clear dealer display 111

29   of such displayed information, the dealer presses (clear button) 112a.

30

31

1   Figure 6d shows dealer console DC 110 specifically comprising Dealer display 111

2   displaying the Eliminated Players at Table 1 list including Player Name, Player ID #

3   and Last Assigned Player Position. Dealer console DC 110 also comprises Special

4   keyboard 112 with (button 6d). When the dealer or the poker tournament manager

5   wants to access and display the Eliminated Players at Table 1 list up to that time,

6   the dealer touches (button 6d) and then touches (enter button) 113a on Standard

7   Keyboard 113. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such stored

8   information. CPU 300 then sends a signal to dealer display 111 to display such

9   stored information known as Eliminated Players at Table 1 shown in Figure 6d. To

10   print such displayed information, the operator presses (printer button) 115a. To

11   clear dealer display 111 of such displayed information, the dealer presses (clear

12   button) 112a. The Eliminated Players list is generated at the various poker tables by

13   the dealers during actual play. When a player at a given poker table loses all his

14   chips, that player is eliminated from the tournament. For example, the dealer at

15   Table 1 touches (eliminated button) 112b on special keyboard 112, then the dealer

16   presses the respective (Player Position 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10) button 114a on numerical

17   keyboard 114, and then the dealer presses (enter button) 113a on standard

18   keyboard 113. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for storage of such Eliminated Player

19   information and for display. CPU 300 already has stored the player name and

20   player ID # corresponding to such eliminated player.

21

22   Figure 6e shows dealer console DC 110 specifically comprising Dealer display 111

23   displaying the Betting Order at Table 1 list including Player Position, Player Name,

24   and Player ID #. Dealer console DC 110 also comprises Special keyboard 112 with

25   (button 6e). When the dealer or the poker tournament manager wants to access and

26   display the Betting Order at Table 1 list during the poker hand, the dealer touches

27   (button 6e) and then touches (enter button) 113a on Standard Keyboard 113. This

28   sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such stored information. CPU 300 then

29   sends a signal to dealer display 111 to display such stored information known as

30   Betting Order at Table 1 shown in Figure 6e. To print such displayed information,

31   the operator presses (printer button) 115a. To clear dealer display 111 of such

1   displayed information, the dealer presses (clear button) 112a. The Betting Order list

2   at a given poker table is generated by the dealer during actual play. When one

3   poker hand ends and another poker hand is to begin, the dealer designates the

4   betting order for the next hand. For example, the dealer at Table 1 touches (betting

5   order) button 112c on special keyboard 112, then the dealer presses the respective

6   (Player Position 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10) button 114a on numerical keyboard 114, and

7   then the dealer presses (enter button) 113a on standard keyboard 113. This sends a

8   signal to CPU 300 for storage of such Betting Order list for such poker table and for

9   display.

10

11   Figure 6f shows dealer console DC 110 specifically comprising Dealer display 111

12   displaying the Dealer Re-Assignments From Table 1 list including Dealer Name,

13   Dealer ID #, and Next Table. Dealer console DC 110 also comprises Special

14   keyboard 112 with (button 6f). When the dealer or the poker tournament manager

15   wants to access and display the Dealer Re-Assignments From Table 1 list up to that

16   time, the dealer touches (button 6f) and then touches (enter button) 113a on

17   Standard Keyboard 113. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such stored

18   information. CPU 300 then sends a signal to dealer display 111 to display such

19   stored information known as Dealer Re-Assignments From Table 1 shown in Figure

20   6f. To print such displayed information, the operator presses (printer button) 115a.

21   To clear dealer display 111 of such displayed information, the dealer presses (clear

22   button) 112a.

23

24   Figure 6g shows dealer console DC 110 specifically comprising Dealer display 111

25   displaying the Dealer Re-Assignments To Table 1 list including Dealer Name, Dealer

26   ID #, and Prior Table. Dealer console DC 110 also comprises Special keyboard 112

27   with (button 6g). When the dealer or the poker tournament manager wants to access

28   and display the Dealer Re-Assignments To Table 1 list up to that time, the dealer

29   touches (button 6g) and then touches (enter button) 113a on Standard Keyboard

30   113. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such stored information. CPU 300

31   then sends a signal to dealer display 111 to display such stored information known

1   as Dealer Re-Assignments To Table 1 shown in Figure 6g. To print such displayed

2   information, the operator presses (printer button) 115a. To clear dealer display 111

3   of such displayed information, the dealer presses (clear button) 112a.

4

5   Figure 6h shows dealer console DC 110 specifically comprising Dealer display 111

6   displaying the Betting Limit at Table 1 including the Little Blind, the Big Blind, the

7   Limits, the Ante, and the Time. Dealer console DC 110 also comprises Special

8   keyboard 112 with (button 6h). When the dealer or the poker tournament manager

9   wants to access and display the Betting Limit at Table 1 at that time, the dealer

10   touches (button 6h) and then touches (enter button) 113a on Standard Keyboard

11   113. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such pre-stored information. CPU

12   300 then sends a signal to dealer display 111 to display such pre-stored information

13   known as Betting Limit at Table 1 shown in Figure 6h. To print such displayed

14   information, the operator presses (printer button) 115a. To clear dealer display 111

15   of such displayed information, the dealer presses (clear button) 112a

16

17   Figure 6i shows dealer console DC 110 specifically comprising Dealer display 111

18   displaying the Tournament Schedule including total TOURNAMENT CHIPS, Play

19   Time, the Little Blind, the Big Blind, the Antes, the Limits, the BREAKS, and the

20   CHIP changes. Dealer console DC 110 also comprises Special keyboard 112 with

21   (button 6i). When the dealer or the poker tournament manager wants to access and

22   display the Tournament Schedule, the dealer touches (button 6i) and then touches

23   (enter button) 113a on Standard Keyboard 113. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for

24   accessing such pre-stored information. CPU 300 then sends a signal to dealer

25   display 111 to display such pre-stored information known as Tournament Schedule

26   shown in Figure 6i. To print such displayed information, the operator presses

27   (printer button) 115a. To clear dealer display 111 of such displayed information, the

28   dealer presses (clear button) 112a.

29

30

31

1   Figure 6j shows dealer console DC 110 specifically comprising Dealer display 111

2   displaying the Dealer Assignments at Table 1 list including Play Time, Dealer Name,

3   and Dealer ID #. Dealer console DC 110 also comprises Special keyboard 112 with

4   (button 6j). When the dealer or the poker tournament manager wants to access and

5   display the Dealer Assignments at Table 1 list up to that time, the dealer touches

6   (button 6j) and then touches (enter button) 113a on Standard Keyboard 113. This

7   sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such stored information. CPU 300 then

8   sends a signal to dealer display 111 to display such stored information known as

9   Dealer Assignments at Table 1 shown in Figure 6j. To print such displayed

10 information, the operator presses (printer button) 115a. To clear dealer display 111

11 of such displayed information, the dealer presses (clear button) 112a.

12

13 Figure 6k shows dealer console DC 110 specifically comprising Dealer display 111

14 displaying the Player Re-Assignments From Table 1 list including Player Name,

15 Player ID #, Player Position, Next Table, and Next Player Position. Dealer console

16 DC 110 also comprises Special keyboard 112 with (button 6k). When the dealer or

17 the poker tournament manager wants to access and display the Player Re-

18 Assignments From Table 1 list up to that time, the dealer touches (button 6k) and

19 then touches (enter button) 113a on Standard Keyboard 113. This sends a signal to

20 CPU 300 for accessing such stored information. CPU 300 then sends a signal to

21 dealer display 111 to display such stored information known as Player Re-

22 Assignments From Table 1 shown in Figure 6k. To print such displayed

23 information, the operator presses (printer button) 115a. To clear dealer display 111

24 of such displayed information, the dealer presses (clear button) 112a. The Player

25 Re-Assignments From Table 1 list is generated by CPU 300 in accordance with the

26 pre-stored algorithms hereinafter explained in relation to Figure 8.

27

28 Figure 6l shows dealer console DC 110 specifically comprising Dealer display 111

29 displaying the Player Re-Assignments To Table 1 list including Player Name, Player

30 ID #, Player Position, Prior Table, and Prior Player Position. Dealer console DC 110

31 also comprises Special keyboard 112 with (button 6l). When the dealer or the poker

1   tournament manager wants to access and display the Player Re-Assignments To

2   Table 1 list up to that time, the dealer touches (button 6l) and then touches (enter

3   button) 113a on Standard Keyboard 113. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for

4   accessing such stored information. CPU 300 then sends a signal to dealer display

5   111 to display such stored information known as Player Re-Assignments To Table 1

6   shown in Figure 6l. To print such displayed information, the operator presses

7   (printer button) 115a. To clear dealer display 111 of such displayed information, the

8   dealer presses (clear button) 112a. The Player Re-Assignments To Table 1 list is

9   generated by CPU 300 in accordance with the pre-stored algorithms hereinafter

10   explained in relation to Figure 8.

11

12   Figure 6m shows dealer console DC 110 specifically comprising Dealer display 111

13   displaying the Tournament Payoff schedule including the number of entries, the

14   Total Entry Fee, the Tournament game, the and Total Prize Pool. Dealer console DC

15   110 also comprises Special keyboard 112 with (button 6m). When the dealer or the

16   poker tournament manager wants to access and display the Tournament Payoff

17   schedule, the dealer touches (button 6m) and then touches (enter button) 113a on

18   Standard Keyboard 113. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such pre-

19   stored information. CPU 300 then sends a signal to dealer display 111 to display

20   such pre-stored information known as Tournament Payoff schedule shown in

21   Figure 6m. To print such displayed information, the operator presses (printer

22   button) 115a. To clear dealer display 111 of such displayed information, the dealer

23   presses (clear button) 112a.

24

25   Figure 6n shows the tournament time line display according to the present invention

26   at touch-responsive display screen 111 of dealer console DC 110. Such time line

27   display will be explained in detail hereinafter

28

29

30

1 <u>Figures 7a-i</u>

2 Figure 7a shows player console PC 10 according to the present invention while

3 Figures 7b-i show various touch-responsive screens of player display 101.

4

5 Figure 7a shows player console PC 10 generally comprising Player display 101,

6 Special keyboard 102, Standard keyboard 103 with (enter button) 103a, Numerical

7 keyboard 104, Player printer 105 with (printer button) 105a, and Card swiper 106

8 with (swiper button) 106a. Special keyboard 102 further comprises (clear display /

9 up / down / all buttons) 102a, (button 7b), (button 7c), (button 7d), (button 7e),

10 (button 7f), (button 7g), (button 7h) and (button 7i). The components of Special

11 keyboard 102, Standard keyboard 103 and Numerical keyboard 104 may be

12 electronically displayed on player display 101 and may be operated as a touch-

13 screen responsive system.

14

15 Figure 7b shows player console PC 10 specifically comprising Player display 101

16 displaying the Initial Player Assignment at Table 1 / Player Position 1 including

17 Player Name and Player ID #. Player console PC 10 also comprises Special

18 keyboard 102 with (button 7b). When the poker tournament manager (only) wants

19 to access and display the Initial Player Assignment at Table 1 / Player Position 1, the

20 manager (only) touches (button 7b) and then touches (enter button) 103a on

21 Standard Keyboard 103. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such stored

22 information. CPU 300 then sends a signal to player display 101 to display such

23 stored information known as Initial Player Assignment at Table 1 / Player Position 1

24 shown in Figure 7b. To print such displayed information, the manager (only)

25 presses (printer button) 105a. To clear player display 101 of such displayed

26 information, the manager (only) presses (clear button) 102b. CPU 300 generates

27 such Initial Player Assignment at Table 1 / Player Position 1 as a result of randomly

28 assigning an entering player to such initial poker table and to such initial player

29 position.

30

31

1   Figure 7c shows player console PC 10 specifically comprising Player display 101

2   displaying the Eliminated Players at Table 1 / Player Position 1 list including Player

3   Name and Player ID #. Player console PC 10 also comprises Special keyboard 102

4   with (button 7c). When the poker tournament manager (only) wants to access and

5   display the Eliminated Players at Table 1 / Player Position 1 list up to that time, the

6   manager (only) touches (button 7c) and then touches (enter button) 103a on

7   Standard Keyboard 103. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such stored

8   information. CPU 300 then sends a signal to player display 101 to display such

9   stored information known as Eliminated Players at Table 1 / Player Position 1

10   shown in Figure 7c. To print such displayed information, the manager (only) presses

11   (printer button) 105a. To clear player display 101 of such displayed information, the

12   manager (only) presses (clear button) 102b. The Eliminated Players list is generated

13   at the various poker tables by the dealers during actual play. When a player at a

14   given poker table loses all his chips, that player is eliminated from the tournament.

15   For example, the dealer at Table 1 touches (eliminated button) 112b on special

16   keyboard 112, then the dealer presses the respective (Player Position 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

17   10) button 114a on numerical keyboard 114, and then the dealer presses (enter

18   button) 113a on standard keyboard 113. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for storage

19   of such Eliminated Player information and for display. CPU 300 already has stored

20   the player name and player ID # corresponding to such eliminated player.

21

22   Figure 7d shows player console PC 10 specifically comprising Player display 101

23   displaying the Betting Order at Table 1 including Player Position, Player Name, and

24   Player ID #. Player console PC 10 also comprises Special keyboard 102 with (button

25   7d). When the player wants to access and display the Betting Order at Table 1

26   during that poker hand, the player touches (button 7d) and then touches (enter

27   button) 103a on Standard Keyboard 103. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for

28   accessing such stored information. CPU 300 then sends a signal to player display

29   101 to display such stored information known as Betting Order at Table 1 shown in

30   Figure 7d. To print such displayed information, the player presses (printer button)

31   105a. To clear player display 101 of such displayed information, the player presses

1   (clear button) 102b. The Betting Order list is generated at a given poker table by the

2   dealer during actual play. When one poker hand ends and another poker hand is to

3   begin, the dealer designates the betting order for the next hand. For example, the

4   dealer at Table 1 touches (betting order) button 112c on special keyboard 112, then

5   the dealer presses the respective (Player Position 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10) button 114a on

6   numerical keyboard 114, and then the dealer presses (enter button) 113a on

7   standard keyboard 113. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for storage of such Betting

8   Order list for Table 1 and for display .

9

10   Figure 7e shows player console PC 10 specifically comprising Player display 101

11   displaying the Betting Limit at Table 1 including the Little Blind, the Big Blind, the

12   Limits, the Antes and the Time. Player console PC 10 also comprises Special

13   keyboard 102 with (button 7e). When the player wants to access and display the

14   Betting Limit at Table 1 at that time, the player touches (button 7e) and then

15   touches (enter button) 103a on Standard Keyboard 103. This sends a signal to CPU

16   300 for accessing such pre-stored information. CPU 300 then sends a signal to

17   player display 101 to display such pre-stored information known as Betting Limit at

18   Table 1 shown in Figure 7e. To print such displayed information, the player presses

19   (printer button) 105a. To clear player display 101 of such displayed information, the

20   player presses (clear button) 102b.

21

22   Figure 7f shows player console PC 10 specifically comprising Player display 101

23   displaying the Tournament Schedule including total TOURNAMENT CHIP count,

24   Play Time, the Little Blind, the Big Blind, the Ante, the Limits, the BREAKS, and

25   the CHIP changes. Player console PC 10 also comprises Special keyboard 102 with

26   (button 7f). When the player wants to access and display the Tournament Schedule,

27   the player touches (button 7f) and then touches (enter button) 103a on Standard

28   Keyboard 103. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such pre-stored

29   information. CPU 300 then sends a signal to player display 101 to display such pre-

30   stored information known as Tournament Schedule shown in Figure 7f. To print

31   such displayed information, the player presses (printer button) 105a. To clear

1   player display 101 of such displayed information, the player presses (clear button)

2   102b.

3

4   Figure 7g shows player console PC 10 specifically comprising Player display 101

5   displaying the Player Re-Assignments From Table 1 / Player Position 1 list

6   including Player Name, Player ID #, Next Table, and Next Player Position. Player

7   console PC 10 also comprises Special keyboard 102 with (button 7g). When the

8   poker tournament manager (only) wants to access the Player Re-Assignments From

9   Table 1 / Player Position 1 list up to that time, the manager (only) touches (button

10   7g) and then touches (enter button) 103a on Standard Keyboard 103. This sends a

11   signal to CPU 300 for accessing such stored information. CPU 300 then sends a

12   signal to player display 101 to display such stored information known as Player Re-

13   Assignments From Table 1 / Player Position 1 shown in Figure 7g. To print such

14   displayed information, the manager (only) presses (printer button) 105a. To clear

15   player display 101 of such displayed information, the manager (only) presses (clear

16   button) 102b. The Player Re-Assignments From Table 1 / Player Position 1 list is

17   generated by CPU 300 in accordance with the pre-stored algorithms hereinafter

18   explained in relation to Figure 8.

19

20   Figure 7h shows player console PC 10 specifically comprising Player display 101

21   displaying the Player Re-Assignments To Table 1 / Player Position 1 list including

22   Player Name, Player ID #, Prior Table, and Prior Player Position. Player console PC

23   10 also comprises Special keyboard 102 with (button 7h). When the poker

24   tournament manager (only) wants to access and display the Player Re-Assignments

25   To Table 1 / Player Position 1 list up to that time, the manager (only) touches

26   (button 7h) and then touches (enter button) 103a on Standard Keyboard 103. This

27   sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such stored information. CPU 300 then

28   sends a signal to player display 101 to display such stored information known as

29   Player Re-Assignments To Table 1 / Player Position 1 shown in Figure 7h. To print

30   such displayed information, the manager (only) presses (printer button) 105a. To

31   clear player display 101 of such displayed information, the manager (only) presses

1 (clear button) 102b. The Player Re-Assignments To Table 1 / Player Position 1 list is

2 generated by CPU 300 in accordance with the pre-stored algorithms hereinafter

3 explained in relation to Figure 8.

4

5 Figure 7i shows player console PC 10 specifically comprising Player display 101

6 displaying the Tournament Payoff schedule including the number of entries, the

7 Total Entry Fee, the Tournament game, and the payoff schedule by place. Player

8 console PC 10 also comprises Special keyboard 102 with (button 7i). When the

9 player wants to access and display the Tournament Payoff schedule, the player

10 touches (button 7i) and then touches (enter button) 103a on Standard Keyboard

11 103. This sends a signal to CPU 300 for accessing such pre-stored information. CPU

12 300 then sends a signal to player display 101 to display such pre-stored information

13 known as Tournament Payoff shown in Figure 7i. To print such displayed

14 information, the player presses (printer button) 105a. To clear player display 101 of

15 such displayed information, the player presses (clear button) 102b.

16

17 According to the present invention, the replenishment of a donee poker table by a

18 donor poker table by way of re-assignment of one randomly chosen player from the

19 donor table to the donee table is controlled by the following table replenishment

20 algorithm. If the poker table with the most remaining players has only one player

21 more than the poker table with the least remaining players, then CPU 300 does not

22 re-assign a player from the most populated poker table to the least populated poker

23 table. For example, let is be assumed that each poker table has either 10 or 9

24 remaining players, or that each poker table has either 9 or 8 remaining players. In

25 such cases the table replenishment algorithm does not come into play and CPU 300

26 takes no action. On the other hand, if the poker table with the most remaining

27 players has two players more than the poker table with the least remaining players,

28 then CPU 300 re-assigns one player from the most populated poker table (the donor

29 table) to the least populated poker table (the donee table) to replenish such least

30 populated poker table. For example, let it be assumed that the most populated poker

31 table has 10 remaining players while the least populated poker table has 8

1 remaining players, or that the most populated poker table has 9 remaining players
2 while the least populated poker table has 7 remaining players. In such cases, CPU
3 300 randomly chooses one of the remaining players from the most populated poker
4 table (the donor table) and then re-assigns such chosen player to replenish the least
5 populated table (the donee table) without closing a table. If two tables each have the
6 most remaining players and two tables each have the least remaining players, then
7 the most populated table numbered higher gives up one player to the least
8 populated table numbered lower, while the most populated table numbered lower
9 gives up one player to the least populated table numbered higher. In other words,
10 donor tables are preferably chosen from the higher numbered tables and donee
11 tables are preferably chosen from the lower numbered tables. This is not an
12 academic exercise because the specific players re-assigned from the most populated
13 tables to the least populated tables are different players based on such random
14 choosing and re-assignment of such players from the higher numbered most
15 populated donor table to the lower numbered least populated donee table. For
16 example, let it be assumed that the poker tournament started with a total of T poker
17 tables being numbered T(1) to T(T). Let it be further assumed that the poker table
18 numbered 1 is designated to be the "final" table where the tournament champion
19 will to determined. Therefore, if poker tables numbered 9 and 7 each have the most
20 remaining players, and if poker tables numbered 1 and 3 each have the least
21 remaining players, then table 9 donates one randomly chosen player to table 1,
22 while table 7 donates one randomly chosen player to table 3. In the examples cited
23 herein, the poker tournament started with 9 tables thereby making T=9.
24
25 According to the present invention, the re-filling or replenishment of at least one
26 donee table by a donor table by way of re-assignment of all the remaining randomly
27 chosen players from the donor table is controlled by the following table closure
28 algorithm. Let it be assumed that the poker tournament started with a total of T
29 poker tables being numbered T(1) to T(T). Let it be further assumed that the poker
30 table numbered 1 is designated to be the final table. Let it be further assumed that
31 the poker table numbered T is designated to be the first poker table to be closed (a

1   donor table), that the poker table numbered T-1 is designated to be the second

2   poker table to be closed (a donor table) and so on until the poker table numbered 2

3   is designated the last poker table to be closed (a donor table) before leaving only

4   final poker table 1. Let it be further assumed that each poker table numbered T(1)

5   to T(T) starts with either P assigned players (or P-1 assigned players but not less

6   than P-1 assigned players). In the examples herein, the poker tournament started

7   with T=9 poker tables each with P=10 initially assigned players for a total of 90

8   entering players. For each poker table T(1) to T(T-1) (being table 8 in this example),

9   add up or sum up all the remaining players at such poker tables 1-8. Such poker

10   tables 1-8 began with a total of 80 players. If the difference between the original 80

11   players and the sum of all the remaining players at poker tables 1-8 is less than all

12   the remaining players at poker table 9, then CPU 300 does not close poker table 9. If

13   the difference between the original 80 players and the sum of all the remaining

14   players at tables 1-8 is equal to or greater than all the remaining players at poker

15   table 9, then CPU 300 closes poker table 9 (a donor table). Also, CPU randomly

16   chooses all the remaining players at poker table 9 and then randomly re-assigns

17   them in the table order T(1) to T(T-1) to either re-fill such poker tables (donee

18   tables) in such order or to maximize (replenish) the number of players per poker

19   table (donee table) in such order. After poker table 9 is closed, if at any time the

20   difference between the original 70 players and the sum of all the remaining players

21   at poker tables 1-7 is less than all the remaining players at poker table 8, then CPU

22   300 does not close poker table 8. If at any time the difference between the original 70

23   players and the sum of all the remaining players at poker tables 1-7 is equal to or

24   greater than all the remaining players at poker table 8, then CPU 300 closes poker

25   table 8 (donor table) . Also, CPU randomly chooses all the remaining players at

26   poker table 8 and randomly re-assigns them in the table order T(1) to T(T-2) to

27   either re-fill such poker tables in such order or to maximize (replenish) the number

28   of players per poker table in such order. This same process continues until poker

29   table 4 is closed (donor table). When poker table 3 (donor table) is closed, all the

30   remaining players at poker tables 1-3 are randomly re-assigned to poker tables 1-2.

31   In other words, poker tables 1-2 are not just re-filled or replenished by adding onto

1   their remaining players. All remaining players at poker table 1-3 are randomly re-
2   assigned to either poker table 1 or poker table 2. In other words, a player who was
3   at poker table 1 might be randomly re-assigned to poker table 2. A player who was
4   poker table 3 might be randomly re-assigned to either poker table 1 or poker table
5   2.

6

7   When poker table 2 (donor table) is closed, all the remaining players at poker tables
8   1-2 are randomly re-assigned to poker table 1. In other words, poker table 1 is not
9   just re-filled or replenished by adding onto the remaining players at poker table 1.
10 All remaining players at poker tables 1-2 are randomly re-assigned to poker table 1.
11 In other words, a player who was at poker table 1 will be randomly re-assigned to a
12 new player position at poker table 1. A player who was poker table 2 will be
13 randomly re-assigned to a new player position at poker table 1.

14

15 <u>Figure 8</u>

16 Figure 8 is an event / time listing showing the re-assignment of players from donor
17 poker tables to donee poker tables, the replenishment of donee poker tables, the re-
18 filling of donee poker tables, and the closure of donor poker tables during a poker
19 tournament according to the present invention. At time t4, tables 1-9 each start full
20 with 10 initially assigned players. At time t5, one player is eliminated from table 4
21 thereby leaving table 4 with 9 remaining players and leaving the rest of the tables
22 each with 10 players. No action is taken by CPU 300 according to the pre-stored
23 algorithms of the present invention. At time t6, one player is eliminated from table 2
24 thereby leaving tables 2 and 4 each with 9 remaining players and leaving the rest of
25 the tables each with 10 players. Again, no action is taken by CPU 300 according to
26 the pre-stored algorithms. At time t7, one player is eliminated from table 7 thereby
27 leaving tables 2, 4 and 7 each with 9 remaining players and leaving the rest of the
28 tables each with 10 players. Again, no action is taken by CPU 300 according to the
29 pre-stored algorithms. At time t8, a second player is eliminated from table 4 thereby
30 leaving table 4 with 8 remaining players, leaving tables 2 and 7 each with 9
31 remaining players, and leaving the rest of the tables each with 10 players. At this

1   time t9, CPU 300 randomly chooses one of the remaining players from donor table 9

2   and re-assigns such chosen player to replenish donee table 4. At time t10, a second

3   player is eliminated from table 2 thereby leaving 8 remaining players at table 2.

4   Again, at this time t11, CPU 300 randomly chooses one of the remaining players

5   from donor table 8 and re-assigns such chosen player to replenish donee table 2. At

6   time t13, two players are eliminated from table 1 thereby leaving 8 remaining

7   players at table 1. At this time CPU 300 randomly chooses one of the remaining

8   players from donor table 6 and re-assigns such chosen player to replenish donee

9   table 1. At time t16, two players are eliminated from table 1 and two players are

10   eliminated from table 3 thereby leaving 7 remaining players at each such table. At

11   this time CPU 300 randomly chooses the 9 players from donor table 9 and re-assigns

12   three players to re-fill donee table 1, one player to re-fill donee table 2, three players

13   to re-fill donee table 3, one player to re-fill donee table 4, and one player to re-fill

14   donee table 5 for a total of 9 re-assigned players. CPU 300 then closes donor table 9

15   by de-activating dealer console 190 of Figure 2 or by de-activating dealer console

16   190 and player consoles 90-99 of Figure 3. The closure of a poker tournament table

17   is significant because it frees a dealer and it frees a poker table and makes them

18   available for the regular poker games. At time t18, CPU 300 randomly chooses the 9

19   players from donor table 8 and re-assigns them to re-fill donee tables 1-7 for a total

20   of 9 re-assigned players. CPU 300 then closes donor table 8. At time t21, CPU 300

21   randomly chooses the 9 players from donor table 7 and re-assigns them to re-fill

22   donee tables 1-6 for a total of 9 re-assigned players. CPU 300 then closes donor table

23   7. At time t26, CPU 300 randomly chooses the 9 players from donor table 6 and re-

24   assigns them to re-fill or replenish donee tables 1-5 for a total of 9 re-assigned

25   players. CPU 300 then closes donor table 6. At time t29, CPU 300 randomly chooses

26   the 7 players from donor table 5 and re-assigns them to re-fill or replenish donee

27   tables 1-4 for a total of 7 re-assigned players. CPU 300 then closes donor table 5. At

28   time t32, CPU 300 randomly chooses the 7 players from donor table 4 and re-assigns

29   them to re-fill donee tables 1-3 for a total of 7 re-assigned players. CPU 300 then

30   closes donor table 4. At time t39, CPU 300 randomly chooses the 7 players from

31   donor table 3, the 6 players from table 1, and the 7 players from table 2, and then

1   randomly re-assigns all such 20 remaining players to new player positions at tables

2   1 and 2 for a total of 20 re-assigned players. CPU 300 then closes donor table 3. At

3   time t48, CPU 300 randomly chooses the 5 players from table 2 and the 5 players

4   from table 2, and then randomly re-assigns all such 10 remaining players to new

5   player positions at final table 1 for a total of 10 re-assigned players. CPU 300 then

6   closes donor table 2. Thereafter, the 10 remaining players at final table 1 continue to

7   play against each other until all players but one are eliminated. The last remaining

8   player is the winner of the tournament and gets the first prize money. The

9   previously eliminated players collect their prize money according to the order in

10   which they were eliminated and the tournament pay-off formula.

11

12   <u>Figures 9a-c</u>

13   Figures 9a-c show the modular plug-in features of dealer console DC 110 and player

14   consoles PC 10-19 onto Table 1 according to the present invention. Figure 9a shows

15   Table 1, "=" shaped connector 600 for connecting to dealer console DC 110, and

16   "+" shaped connectors 700-790 for respectively connecting to player consoles PC

17   10-19. Figure 9b shows back side 601 of substantially flat dealer console DC 110 and

18   "=" shaped connector 602 for connecting to "=" shaped connector 600 located on

19   Table 1. Figure 9c shows back side 706 of substantially flat player consoles PC 10-19

20   and "+" shaped connector 707 for connecting to "+" shaped connector 700-790 on

21   Table 1.

22

23   <u>Figures 10a-b</u>

24   Figures 10a-b show the modular plug-in features of main console MC 200 onto its

25   support structure according to the present invention. Figure 10a shows back side

26   404 of main console support 403 and "X" shaped connector 405 for connecting to

27   main console MC 200. Figure 10b shows back side 401 of substantially flat main

28   console MC 200 and "X" shaped connector 402 for connecting to "X" shaped

29   connector 405 of main console support 403.

30

1   **While the present invention has been described in terms of specific illustrative**

2   **embodiments, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that many other**

3   **embodiments and modifications are possible within the spirit and scope of the**

4   **disclosed principle.**

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